THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF SIMILARITY INDIVIDUALS VALUE IN THEIR PARTNER AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION AND OUTCOME

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Angela Christine Bradley

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF SIMILARITY INDIVIDUALS VALUE IN THEIR PARTNER AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION AND OUTCOME

Name: Bradley, Angela, Christine
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Advisor: Dr. Catherine Lutz

This study investigated the relation between interpersonal similarity on characteristics valued by individuals and their relationship satisfaction and relationship outcome. The study was longitudinal with a 6-week time lag between Time 1 and Time 2 ratings. The interactions between ratings of similarity and importance of similarity on each of the Big-5 personality traits (i.e., neuroticism, extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, and agreeableness), attitudes, interests, religious orientation, and ethnicity were used to predict relationship satisfaction and outcome. It was also examined whether variables embodied in the social exchange model (i.e., cost-benefit assessment of one’s relationship and perceived availability of alternative relationships) mediate the relationship between similarity on valued dimensions and relationship satisfaction. Results revealed that only the Similarity x Importance interactions for agreeableness and attitudes were significant predictors of satisfaction. Specifically, it was found that when similarity on agreeableness and attitudes and importance of similarity on those dimensions were high, satisfaction was highest, compared to when similarity was low and importance of similarity was low, when similarity was low and importance high, and when similarity was high and importance low. None of the Similarity x Importance interactions was able to significantly predict relationship outcome. Finally, the results indicated that the social exchange variables did not mediate the relationship between similarity on preferred characteristics and satisfaction.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Romantic relationships are central to the lives of most people. When these relationships are satisfying, individuals experience elevated levels of general well-being and life satisfaction (Myers & Diener, 1995). On the other hand, marital distress and instability can result in increased physical and psychological problems for spouses as well as children (Glenn, 1990; Grych & Fincham, 1990). For instance, Prigerson, Maciejewski, and Rosenheck (1999) found that both marital dissatisfaction and divorce were associated with emotional problems such as depression, and increased mental health service use by women. In addition, Hintikka, Koskela, Kontula, Koskela, and Viinamaki (1999) found that men and women in unhappy marriages were at significantly higher risk for common mental disorders, such as depression, as compared with those in happy marriages. Emery (1982) also found that marital discord is associated with a number of maladjustment problems in children, including aggression, conduct disorders, and anxiety. Other studies also have found externalizing problems, such as delinquency and antisocial behavior (Emery & O’Leary, 1984), and internalizing problems like depression (Peterson & Zill, 1986), in children whose parents are experiencing marital discord or are divorced. Taken together, these research findings indicate that relationship satisfaction and outcome can exert a powerful influence on one’s general quality of life. It is, therefore, alarming that more than half of all first
marriages in the United States experience dissatisfaction and end in divorce (Council on Families in America, 1995).

These observations have been the catalyst of extensive research on variables related to satisfaction and outcome in close relationships. Perhaps two of the most widely studied relationship variables influencing relationship satisfaction and longevity have been interpersonal similarity and complementarity (i.e., the extent to which two people’s differing needs or traits come together in an interlocking fashion). It has been debated which of these two factors is the stronger predictor of satisfaction and outcome. White and Hatcher (1984) reviewed the research on the influence of these constructs in determining relationship outcomes, and found that the overwhelming body of research in the area supports the notion that similarity is the most reliable predictor of relationship satisfaction (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Cattell & Nesselroade, 1967; Elizur & Klein, 1974; Meyer & Pepper, 1977; and Murstein & Beck, 1972). However, this literature for the most part is limited to a nomothetic investigation of which dimensions of similarity predict relationship satisfaction and outcome. The proposed study, therefore, seeks to advance our understanding of relationships by examining individual differences in the dimensions of similarity that people weight as important in their own romantic relationships. The remainder of the introduction will examine the research findings on several factors that have been linked to relationship satisfaction and outcome. The discussion of these factors will be divided into sections: individual difference variables and relationship variables. Finally, a study will be proposed that examines an idiographic approach to measuring the association between similarity and both relationship satisfaction and outcome.
Individual Difference Variables

Factors affecting relationship satisfaction and outcome can be divided into two broad categories: individual difference variables and relationship variables. Individual difference variables refer to characteristics of the individuals within the relationship, such as personality traits, self-esteem, and gender role identity. On the other hand, relationship variables refer to interpersonal characteristics or processes, such as communication, reinforcement strategies, and similarity. Analysis of these variables can be done from several different perspectives. One can look at participant’s self-rating on a given predictor variable, participant’s rating of partner, partner’s self-rating, and partner’s rating of participant. In addition, these different ratings can be assessed in terms of their impact on participant’s self-rated relationship satisfaction, participant’s partner-rated satisfaction, partner’s self-rated satisfaction, and partner’s participant-rated satisfaction. The importance of looking at these different vantage points is that it allows for distinction between subjective and objective ratings of predictor and criterion variables. In addition, assessing multiple vantage points captures the interdependence of the participant’s and partner’s characteristics and satisfaction levels. Thus far, the research literature generally emphasizes participant and partner self-ratings on both predictor and criterion variables. This methodological issue will be referenced when describing specific studies. In this section, a number of individual difference variables that have been found to influence relationship satisfaction and outcome will be examined. Specifically, research findings on the contribution of personality traits, attachment style, gender role identity, self-esteem, and romantic beliefs will be discussed.
Personality Traits

Several different personality traits have been identified as being significant predictors of relationship satisfaction and outcome. For instance, empathy (Davis & Oathout, 1987), hostility (Newton & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1995), self-disclosure and expressiveness (Geist & Gilbert, 1996), dominance and pleasantness (Blum & Mehrabian, 1999) have all been found to account for a significant amount of the variance in relationship satisfaction. In addition, a number of studies have been done on the Big Five personality traits: neuroticism (emotional instability), extraversion (warm, cheerful, energetic, assertive, and adventurous behavior), conscientiousness (responsibleness), agreeableness (cooperativeness), and openness to experience. Several studies suggest that individuals who are high on neuroticism (based on participant’s self-ratings and partner’s ratings of participant) report greater marital dissatisfaction (Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Karney, Bradbury, Fincham, & Sullivan, 1994; and Thomsen & Gilbert, 1998) and are more likely to become divorced over a time span of 40 years (Kelly & Conley, 1987). In addition, the partners of individuals high on neuroticism also reported elevated levels of dissatisfaction in their relationships (Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981; Karney et al., 1994). Further, Watson, Hubbard, and Weise (2000) found that conscientiousness and agreeableness, as measured by participant’s self-rating and partner’s rating of participant, were consistent positive predictors of satisfaction for participants in dating couples. The study also found extraversion, also measured by participant’s self-rating and partner’s rating of participant, to be a strong positive predictor of participants’ marital satisfaction. Likewise, positive affectivity of participants was positively correlated with participants’ satisfaction, and negative
affectivity of participants was negatively correlated with both participants’ and partners’ satisfaction for dating and married couples.

Siavelis and Lamke (1992) looked at the influence of the traits of instrumentalness and expressiveness (nurturing, emotionally responsive, and supportive) in dating relationships. They found that for males, participants’ self-rated expressiveness and partners’ participant-rated instrumentalness and expressiveness significantly correlated with participants’ satisfaction. For females, participants’ self-rated instrumentalness and expressiveness, as well as partners’ participant-rated instrumentalness and expressiveness were significantly related to participants’ satisfaction. Having looked at the effect of personality traits, the influence of attachment on relationship satisfaction will be discussed.

Attachment

Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that working models formed from child-caretaker attachment are related to corresponding relationship styles in adulthood. Their research showed that the prevalence of the 3 major attachment styles described by Bowlby is similar in infancy and adulthood: 70 percent show secure attachment, 20 percent show avoidant attachment, and 10 percent show anxious attachment. Furthermore, the research literature indicates a relationship between adult attachment style and relationship satisfaction. Individuals who have secure attachment styles report greater satisfaction in their relationships than do individuals with insecure attachment styles (Hammond & Fletcher, 1991; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989; Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Senchak & Leonard, 1992). This might be due, in part, to evidence that secure attachment is associated with adaptive behaviors, such as less rejection and more support in marital problem-solving.
interactions (Kobak & Hazan, 1991). Numerous studies also indicate that people with secure attachment styles describe their relationships as having more positive and less negative emotion, and more emotional involvement and stability (Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). In addition, anxiety about abandonment predicts higher levels of coercive communication, less mutual communication, and lower marital quality for both men and women, while comfort with closeness predicts more mutual communication and higher marital quality for men (Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1994).

In general, it has been shown that men with avoidant attachment organization and women with ambivalent attachment organization rate their relationships most negatively (Collins & Read, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994). There is also further evidence that the influence of attachment on relationship satisfaction is somewhat different for men and women. Simpson (1990) showed that in dating couples, participants’ relationship satisfaction is positively correlated with their own secure attachment and negatively correlated with avoidant attachment for both men and women. However, anxious attachment in the self is correlated with low levels of satisfaction for women only. Recent studies have also shown that the attachment style of one’s partner also affects one’s relationship satisfaction. Relationships involving women with anxious attachment are rated lower in satisfaction by both partners, while those involving men with high comfort with closeness are rated higher in satisfaction by both partners (Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney, 1994; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Simpson, 1990).

Jones and Cunningham (1996) conducted a study to determine the influence of attachment style after controlling for self-esteem, romantic beliefs, and gender roles.
Results indicated that the self-reported attachment style of individuals, as well as the self-reported attachment style of their partners were able to significantly predict both partners' relationship satisfaction, even after partialing out the effects of the other variables. Specifically, male comfort with closeness predicted both partners' relationship satisfaction, while female and male anxiety about abandonment predicted unhappiness for both partners.

Another study done by Morrison, Urquiza, and Goodlin-Jones (1997) looked at the influence of attachment organization in determining perceptions of interaction in relationships, which they hypothesized would in turn affect relationship satisfaction. Two dimensions of interaction perception were identified: affiliation and interdependence. These are said to occur at two levels: transitive (actions toward the other) and intransitive (actions in response to the other). On the transitive level, affiliation ranges from attacking to loving, while interdependence runs from freeing to controlling. On the intransitive level, affiliation runs from hostile protest to connecting, and interdependence runs from asserting separation to submitting. It was found that greater security of attachment was associated with perceptions of more loving and connecting interaction, and this was strongly associated with less relationship distress for both women and men. On the other hand, insecure attachment was related to perceptions of interactions that are freeing and asserting separation, and this was associated with more relationship distress for women. When perceptions of interaction were entered along with attachment in the regression equation, the effect of attachment on relationship satisfaction was substantially reduced, demonstrating that perceptions of interaction
mediated the relationship between attachment and satisfaction. At this point, the contribution of gender to relationship happiness will be examined.

Gender Role Identity

The effect of gender identity on relationship satisfaction has been studied extensively. Ickes and Barnes (1978) first provided evidence that adherence to traditional gender roles is associated with relationship incompatibility. Antill (1983) found that the happiness of both spouses is higher when their partner is high on positive aspects of femininity, which includes nurturant, emotionally responsive and supportive behavior. Furthermore, Rosenzweig and Dailey (1989) reported that androgynous men and women, that is, those high on both masculinity and femininity, show the highest level of dyadic adjustment. A study conducted by Jones and Cunningham (1996) indicated that gender-stereotyped behavior was able to significantly predict relationship satisfaction, even after removing the effect of attachment (closeness with comfort and anxiety about abandonment). Specifically, positive aspects of femininity in men was associated with both own and partner’s satisfaction, while positive aspects of femininity in women was only associated with their own satisfaction. In addition, negative aspects of masculinity (e.g., emotional unresponsiveness) in both men and women was related to relationship dissatisfaction for both partners.

Vanyperen and Buunk (1991) examined how sex-role attitudes impact relationship satisfaction through the process of social comparison. In the absence of an objective standard, people traditionally evaluate their relationships based on making comparisons with similar others (Festinger, 1954). In other words, women in relationships – in the absence of other indicators - will compare the input-reward ratio of
their relationship to the input-reward ratio of other women in relationships in order to assess relationship quality (referential comparisons), with perceptions of equity resulting in greater satisfaction. Recently, however, male-female relationships have changed considerably in that roles are considerably more egalitarian and symmetrical (Rachlin, 1987; Sekaran, 1986). As a result, this increasing similarity between partners has caused a shift in the point of reference for making comparisons (Vanyperen & Buunk, 1991). So instead of women comparing their input-reward ratio with that of other women, they compare this ratio with that of their male partner in order to determine equity (relational comparisons). As a result of this new point of comparison, perceptions of equity and satisfaction are also altered. In a study conducted by Vanyperen and Buunk (1991), egalitarian individuals reported feeling less satisfied in their relationships than traditional individuals, with egalitarian women being the least satisfied. Furthermore, individuals in egalitarian relationships were more uncertain about how things were going in their relationships, and women as a whole were more uncertain than men in this regard. These findings may be attributed to egalitarian women’s use of relational comparisons, rather than the traditional referential comparisons, as the primary approach to evaluate their relationships. In other words, because egalitarian women use a newer and more demanding standard for comparison (comparing themselves with their partner rather than other women), they tend to be less certain in their judgments and less satisfied. As a matter of fact, due to their high level of uncertainty, egalitarian women were sometimes led to utilize referential comparisons in addition to relational comparisons in assessing relationship satisfaction.
Self-esteem

Self-esteem is yet another factor that has been linked to relationship satisfaction. The precise nature of this connection, however, has been quite controversial. According to Walster (1965), people with low self-esteem find romantic relationships more satisfying and fulfilling than those with high self-esteem because they have a special need for attention. Additional support for this finding came from Dion and Dion (1973), who found that people with low self-esteem report more intense experiences of romantic love and express stronger interpersonal attitudes of love and trust for their partners than persons with high self-esteem.

Conversely, theorists like Rogers (1959) and Maslow (1968) postulate that people with high self-esteem are more capable of experiencing satisfying relationships than those with low self-esteem. The idea here is that a person has to love himself/herself before he/she is able to love another, and experience the happiness of being in a loving relationship (Dion & Dion, 1988). This theory has been supported by several researchers, who have shown a positive relationship between self-esteem and relationship satisfaction (Hall, 1975; Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler, 1988; Jones & Cunningham, 1996; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; McCahan, 1973; Schultz & Schultz, 1989). For instance, a study done by Hendrick, Hendrick, and Adler (1988) found that the self-esteem of one partner affects the satisfaction of the other. Specifically, the partners of men with high self-esteem report being more satisfied with their relationships than those of men with low self-esteem.
So although a few studies have shown a negative relationship between self-esteem and relationship happiness, the vast majority of the research in this area indicate a positive relationship between self-esteem and satisfaction.

**Romantic Beliefs**

A final individual difference variable that has been linked to relationship satisfaction is romantic beliefs. According to researchers, people’s romantic beliefs are important in shaping their level of relationship satisfaction. It is important to point out that many romantic beliefs are unrealistic, but some unrealistic beliefs are maladaptive, while others are adaptive. Studies have found that individuals who endorse certain dysfunctional relationship beliefs are less likely to be satisfied in their relationships (Epstein & Eidelson, 1981). These beliefs include the idea that disagreement is destructive to a relationship, spouses should be able to read each others’ minds, partners cannot change significant aspects of themselves, sexual performance should be perfect, and men and women have different emotional needs. Such beliefs are also negatively correlated with couples’ desire to improve their marital relationship (Epstein & Eidelson, 1981). On the other hand, studies have found that people with strong, idealistic romantic beliefs (e.g., exaggerating the positive aspects of their partner) in general tend to have higher motivation and persistence in their relationships (Taylor & Brown, 1988), which leads to greater satisfaction.

Jones and Stanton (1988) conducted a study to determine whether dysfunctional beliefs specific to romantic relationships would have a stronger association with marital dissatisfaction than general dysfunctional beliefs. General dysfunctional beliefs as a whole did not significantly correlate with marital distress, while dysfunctional beliefs
related to relationships were as a group significantly associated with dissatisfaction. The researchers also looked at particular beliefs that predicted marital distress. The belief “disagreement is destructive” emerged as the only unique significant predictor of distress for the individuals who held it.

Romantic idealization has been found to correlate with love for one’s partner, and predicts progress toward relationship permanence over a 6-month period (Rubin, 1973). Jones and Cunningham (1996) looked at the effect of romanticism on relationship satisfaction. Romanticism refers to the degree to which an individual idealizes his/her partner and relationship. This variable was 1 of 2 predictors - the other being gender roles - that was most strongly correlated with relationship satisfaction. They found that both males and females holding this set of beliefs rate their level of relationship satisfaction significantly higher than those who do not hold it. Furthermore, romanticism on the part of participants is positively related to satisfaction of their partners. The researchers provide a possible explanation for these findings: romantic behavior on the part of romanticizing individuals likely results in reciprocation of such behavior by their partners, which serves to increase both partners’ relationship happiness.

To summarize, the research literature has identified several individual difference factors that related to relationship satisfaction and outcome. Personality characteristics such as neuroticism and agreeableness have consistently been shown to impact satisfaction in relationships. Attachment is yet another variable cited in the literature, with secure attachment styles being positively related to relationship satisfaction. Research also has shown gender role identity to have an impact, whereby egalitarian individuals, for instance, tend to be more dissatisfied with their relationships. Self-
esteem also has been identified as a positive predictor of relationship satisfaction. Finally, individuals’ romantic beliefs are said to relate to satisfaction, with certain unrealistic beliefs being associated with dissatisfaction, and others being associated with satisfaction.

**Relationship Variables**

In this section, several relationship variables that have been shown to impact relationship satisfaction and outcome will be examined. These variables include reinforcement strategies, problem solving skills, communication, relationship quality, interdependence, maintenance behaviors, and similarity.

**Problem-solving and Communication Skills**

Behavioral marital theory emphasizes the importance of couples’ interaction as a major determinant of marital distress. Specifically, these theorists postulate that distressed couples are deficient in skills needed to resolve problems that arise in marital relationships. As a result, these couples rely on negative problem solving and communication strategies to solve problems. A number of studies have looked at the contribution of such strategies on relationship satisfaction. It has been shown that marital distress results when couples use negative strategies, such as coercion, to change each other’s behaviors (Markman & Floyd, 1980). This leads to exchanges with unsatisfying outcomes, and as these unsatisfying exchanges increase, the quality and frequency of interaction declines (Liberman, 1975; Patterson & Reid, 1970; Stuart, 1969; Weiss, Hops, & Patterson, 1973). On the other hand, non-distressed couples tend to use positive reinforcement to bring about change, and therefore, limit negative interactions and increase exchanges with favorable outcomes (Liberman, 1975; Patterson & Reid, 1970;
Stuart, 1969; Weiss et al., 1973). According to Gottman, et al. (1976), distressed couples rate their communication during problem-solving more negatively. In addition, these couples use more negative verbal and nonverbal behaviors during communication (Billings, 1979; Birchler, Weiss, & Vincent, 1975), report more relationship problems in general (Birchler & Webb, 1977), and rate their relationships as less satisfying (Birchler et al., 1975; Gottman et al., 1976).

The research discussed above focuses primarily on characteristics of dysfunctional communication. Other studies have explored the characteristics that constitute effective communication. The importance of communication seems to lie in its ability to convey empathy and support (Davis & Oathout, 1987). These general perceptions are based on a number of relationship processes that take place via communication. Meeks, Hendrick, and Hendrick (1998) conducted a study in which they described four such communication processes: empathy, self-disclosure, conflict, and relational competence.

Empathy basically describes one person's responsiveness to the ongoing experience of another person (Davis & Oathout, 1987). A key component of empathy is perspective-taking behavior, and such behavior has been linked to relationship satisfaction (Long, 1990). The significance of perspective taking probably lies in the idea that individuals hold expectations regarding the degree to which their partners should understand their perspective, and insofar as these expectations are fulfilled, relationship satisfaction increases (Long & Andrews, 1990). However, it is dyadic perspective taking, as opposed to general perspective taking, that is associated with relationship satisfaction (Long, 1990). Dyadic perspective taking refers to perspective-taking behavior in a
specific close relationship, while general perspective taking is more dispositional, and applies across a wide variety of situations (Long, 1990).

Self-disclosure is another important component of communication. It refers to any voluntarily disclosed, self-relevant information that is considered personal (Antill & Cotton, 1987). Researchers have found that self-disclosure contributes to relationship satisfaction (Millar & Millar, 1988). Specifically, participants who report the highest levels of self-disclosure are the most satisfied, while those who report low levels of self-disclosure are the least satisfied (Rosenfeld & Bowen, 1991). The study by Meeks et al. (1998) confirmed the positive association between participants’ self-disclosure and their relationship satisfaction. It also found that participants’ perception of their partner’s self-disclosure was related to their level of satisfaction.

Another communication factor related to satisfaction is conflict tactics. Canary and Cupach (1988) identified 3 such tactics. Integrative tactics are constructive statements that involve information sharing, collaboration, and negotiation. Distributive tactics are destructive statements involving criticism, anger, and sarcasm. Avoidance tactics include topic shifting, denial of conflict, and semantic focus. It has been shown that non-distressed couples use significantly more integrative tactics (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Jacobsen, Follette, & McDonald, 1982). Integrative communication contributes to more rewarding interaction, greater likelihood of conflict resolution, and higher levels of intimacy and satisfaction with one’s partner and relationship (Canary & Cupach, 1988). The findings of Meeks et al. (1998) indicated that own and partner’s use of integrative tactics were positively associated with participants’ satisfaction, whereas own and
partner’s use of distributive and avoidance tactics were negatively related to participants’ satisfaction.

Lastly, relational competence is defined as the perceived ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with one’s relationship partner (Spitzberg & Hecht, 1984). It is said to encompass several of the aforementioned communication behaviors, such as empathy, self-disclosure, and integrative tactics (Bochner & Kelly, 1974). According to Cupach and Spitzberg (1981), relational competence is comprised of 3 components: competence, appropriateness, and effectiveness. Competence is defined as an interpersonal impression of the quality of a particular communication performance (Canary & Cupach, 1988). Appropriateness refers to the results from communication that avoid clear violation of relational standards, rules, or expectations (Canary & Cupach, 1988). And effectiveness is the extent to which actors’ objectives are achieved (Canary & Cupach, 1988). Relational competence of one’s partner is thought to contribute to feelings of trust, intimacy, control mutuality, and relationship satisfaction (Canary & Cupach, 1988). Results from Meeks et al. (1998) revealed that participants’ perception of partner’s relational competence was indeed positively related to their relationship satisfaction.

**Relationship Quality**

Another factor that has been linked to relationship satisfaction and outcome is relationship quality. According to Kurdek (2000), relationship quality refers to forces within a relationship that promote the happiness of each partner, as well as institutionalized forces outside the relationship that influence partners to stay together. In this study, forces within the relationship were represented by intimacy (merging of the
self and the other partner), autonomy (maintaining a sense of self separate from the relationship), equality (having equal power and investment in the relationship), and constructive problem solving (use of negotiation and compromise). Forces outside the relationship were represented by external barriers to leaving the relationship (e.g., social and religious pressures to remain together).

Results indicated that participant perceptions of high intimacy were related to higher self ratings of satisfaction, while participant perceptions of low autonomy were related to lower self ratings of satisfaction. In addition, participants’ satisfaction was related to their own perceptions of equality and constructive problem solving, as well as to their partner’s perceptions of equality and constructive problem solving in the relationship. In terms of relationship outcome, low levels of intimacy, low levels of equality, infrequent constructive problem solving, and weak barriers to leaving the relationship were all correlated with dissolution over a 5 year period.

**Maintenance Behaviors**

Maintenance behaviors and expectations for such behavior are yet another relationship factor that has been associated with relationship satisfaction in the literature. Maintenance behaviors refer to behaviors carried out by dyadic partners to keep their relationship in a particular state or condition (Dindia & Canary, 1993). According to Stafford and Canary (1991), there are five basic types of maintenance behaviors: positivity (cheerful and optimistic behavior), openness (self-disclosure and direct discussion of the relationship), assurances (messages emphasizing commitment to one’s partner and relationship), social networks (reliance on shared friends and affiliations), and sharing tasks (equal responsibility for tasks facing the couple). Numerous studies
have indicated that all five strategies are strong and consistent predictors of satisfaction (Canary & Stafford, 1992; Dainton, Stafford, & Canary, 1994; Stafford & Canary, 1991).

Dainton (2000) conducted a study to determine whether expectations regarding the use of maintenance behaviors by one’s partner impact one’s level of relationship satisfaction. Results showed a direct association between the extent to which participants perceived their partner to fulfill their expectations for use of each maintenance strategy and participants’ level of satisfaction. Furthermore, fulfillment of expectations for assurances and sharing tasks were the strongest predictors of satisfaction. The study also sought to compare the frequency of maintenance behaviors relative to the discrepancy between expectations and actual behaviors as differential predictors of satisfaction. Even though both factors were significantly associated with satisfaction, with greater frequency and lower discrepancy predicting higher satisfaction, it was found that the frequency of one’s partner’s use of maintenance behaviors was more strongly related to one’s satisfaction than was the discrepancy between one’s expectations for partner’s behavior and partner’s actual behavior. Finally, findings indicated that over time, perceptions of partner’s use of maintenance strategies declined while expectations remained the same, thus increasing the gap between expectations and behavior. This is perhaps because maintenance strategies become more difficult to sustain over time and familiarity leads to more negative interactional styles (Stafford & Dainton, 1994).

Interdependence Theory

Interdependence or social exchange is a widely researched construct that has been linked consistently to relationship satisfaction and maintenance. Social exchange theory posits that people engage in an ongoing process of weighing the benefits and costs of
their relationships, and comparing that distribution to what would be expected from alternative relationships. (Floyd & Wasner, 1994; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Essentially, satisfaction and continuance of the relationship are based on the perception that the rewards of the relationship outweigh the costs, and alternative relationships would be less rewarding than the current one (Floyd & Wasner, 1994; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). It is also suggested that one’s level of satisfaction with the current relationship partly determines how alternatives are evaluated (Johnson & Rusbult, 1989). Thus, people may devalue alternative relationships when they feel satisfied with their current relationship (Johnson & Rusbult, 1989).

Floyd and Wasner (1994) conducted a study in which they looked at the relationships among relationship equity (positive balance of rewards and costs), relationship satisfaction, and commitment. They found that equity was strongly related to positive ratings of satisfaction. In addition, satisfaction was shown to be positively related to stronger feelings of commitment to the relationship. Equity, commitment, and satisfaction were all significantly negatively correlated with perceptions of desirable relationship alternatives. The authors speculate that relationships in which benefits outweigh costs and where there are perceptions that desirable alternatives are not available lead to feelings of satisfaction. This in turn brings about a sense of commitment. Such satisfaction and commitment then serve to make alternatives seem even less desirable.

Stephen (1984) postulated one factor that may make an important contribution to people’s perceptions of rewards in relationships, the degree to which couples possess a shared reality of the relationship. He proposed a theory of symbolic interactionism in
which couples exchange meanings and interpretations of reality. When individual meanings and interpretations are confirmed by one’s partner, this becomes a source of tremendous reward in the relationship. Ongoing interaction over time then leads to the generation of a common set of assumptions about the way things are, the way they interrelate, and the degree of importance they hold. The degree to which couples develop this shared meaning reflects the extent to which they are symbolically interdependent. This level of interdependence is then believed to influence couple members’ perceptions of satisfaction in the relationship. Results of Stephen (1984) indicated that symbolic interdependence was strongly positively correlated with both relationship commitment and relationship satisfaction. In addition, symbolic interdependence was found to be positively related with relationship status. This is presumably because correspondent meanings lead to a greater percept of rewards, which, in turn, leads to satisfaction and commitment. Continued interaction then increases the development of symbolic interdependence, which serves to bring about even further commitment.

**Similarity vs. Complementarity**

Interpersonal similarity and complementarity (the extent to which two people’s differing needs or traits come together in an interlocking fashion) are two of the most widely researched variables in the area of relationship satisfaction and outcome. It has been debated extensively which of these two factors is the stronger predictor of satisfaction and outcome. To this end, White and Hatcher (1984) conducted a review of the research on the impact of these two different constructs on relationship satisfaction and stability. Two types of complementarity were identified in the literature (Winch, 1955). Type I refers to the mutual gratification of identical needs which differ in
intensity between two partners. For instance, one partner may be high on the need for power, while the other is low on that need. Type II is the mutual gratification of differing but related needs. For example, one partner might be high on the need for control, while the other is high on the need for self-degradation. Katz, Glucksberg, and Krauss (1960) found that high satisfaction husbands, compared to low, were less similar to their wives in achievement and support, and tended to be less similar in dominance. The latter results were interpreted as evidence for Type I complementarity. However, Blazer (1963) conducted a study in which they found no relationship between complementarity and happiness. Rather, they found an association between need similarity and happiness. Thereafter, Murstein and Beck (1972) found a significant relation between similarity and both husbands’ marital adjustment, and the overall adjustment level for couples. Meyer and Pepper (1977) examined the contribution of complementarity compared to that of similarity in determining marital adjustment. Neither Type I nor Type II complementarity was significantly associated with adjustment. Instead, well-adjusted couples were more similar than poorly adjusted couples on the needs for affiliation, aggression, autonomy, and nurturance. Other studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between trait similarity and marital happiness and stability (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Blum & Mehrabian, 1999; Burleson & Denton, 1992; Cattell & Nesselroade, 1967; Elizur & Klein, 1974; Neimeyer, 1984; and Weisfeld, Russell, Weisfeld, & Wells, 1992;). Despite the tremendous support for similarity in the current literature, however, there have been methodological criticisms of this research. Cronbach (1958) and Wright (1968) have argued that the use of dyadic indices to define similarity and complementarity causes participants to lose their independent identity because scores
are calculated for pairs of participants (through correlation or a difference score) rather than individuals. As a result, the effect of similarity is overestimated, while complementarity effects may be masked. However, the aforementioned study by Meyer and Pepper (1977), which pitted similarity against complementarity, wanted to ensure that complementarity effects were not contaminated. As such, the researchers employed an innovative and sophisticated methodology that would be more sensitive to such effects than the typical approaches. Nonetheless, as was indicated earlier, the results indicated that similarity was the only significant predictor of adjustment. There was no support for complementarity. The overwhelming body of research in this area, therefore, supports the notion that similarity is the stronger and more reliable predictor of relationship satisfaction and outcome. More recently, researchers have looked at specific dimensions of similarity as being related to relationship satisfaction and stability.

**Specific Dimensions of Similarity**

Several studies have examined the contribution of specific types of similarity in influencing relationship satisfaction. For instance, Neimer (1984) found that spouses with similar levels of cognitive complexity reported greater marital satisfaction than did those with dissimilar levels of complexity. In other words, it was not the overall level of couples’ cognitive skills that impacted satisfaction. Instead, it was the degree of similarity in their cognitive skills. Similarity is believed to be more important than complexity because congruence in cognitive structures probably leads to more enjoyable communication and interaction between spouses (Runkel, 1956; Triandis, 1975). Similarly, Burleson and Denton (1992) conducted a study in which they looked at similarity in social-cognitive and communication skills as it relates to marital satisfaction.
The results of this study also indicated that similarity in these skills was positively related to marital satisfaction. Low-skilled couples were no less happy with their marriages than high-skilled couples. Furthermore, distressed spouses demonstrated greater dissimilarity in their social-cognitive and communication skills relative to non-distressed spouses.

Belief and attitude similarity have also been consistently linked to relationship satisfaction (Byrne & Blaylock, 1963; Chadwick, Albrecht, & Kunzu, 1976; Hendrick, 1981). According to Byrne (1971), people have a desire to hold “correct” attitudes and values. But since attitudes and values cannot be objectively verified, they turn to others for such validation. Thus, when people learn that another person shares their beliefs, this becomes a source of positive reinforcement. And as learning principles have demonstrated, persons are drawn toward sources of positive reinforcement. Therefore, people are attracted to others with similar attitudes/values. Jones and Stanton (1988) examined how belief similarity was related to marital satisfaction. They found that perceived similarity in couples’ belief systems was negatively associated with marital distress. In addition, marital distress was greatest when belief dissimilarity involved one partner’s holding dysfunctional relationship beliefs (e.g., disagreement is destructive).

In addition to similarity in beliefs and attitudes, some researchers have explored the role of similarity in couples’ perceptions of events. Beliefs and attitudes refer to preexisting ideas held by individual couple members about a wide variety of issues. In contrast, perceptions are defined as the interpretations and evaluations couple members make about shared experiences (Deal, Wampler, & Halverson, 1992). It was shown that couples that were satisfied with their marriage were more likely to have similar perceptions about their relationship and their family. Furthermore, spouses that had
congruent perceptions regarding one aspect of their life (e.g., the marital relationship) also tended to have similar perceptions about other aspects of their common experience, such as the children. In contrast, spouses in less satisfying relationships did not perceive their marriage and family in the same way. Where one couple member saw something as being positive, the other saw it as negative.

Similarity in activities and interests has also been associated with relationship satisfaction and outcome. Researchers have shown that engaging in joint activities is associated with increased couple communication (Flora & Segrin, 1998; Orthner, 1975), as well as reports of getting along better and being more satisfied (Bowen & Orthner, 1983; Crohan, 1992). Swim and Surra (1999) conducted a study in which they looked at couple similarity in preferences for gender-stereotyped activities as it relates to relationship satisfaction. This study found that when participant and partner both liked gender-typed activities of the participant, couples reported doing more activities together, engaging in more relationship maintenance, and being more satisfied than couples in which both partners in the relationship disliked the gender-typed activities of the participant. In other words, when individuals violate traditional gender preferences by being interested in gender-typed activities that their partner prefers, relationship satisfaction is enhanced.

Individual Differences Approach

Most studies looking at similarity have examined its relationship with satisfaction and outcome at the group rather than individual level. One potential difficulty with this approach, however, is that looking at these group effects can mask important effects occurring within specific individuals. For instance, if similarity in interests is positively
correlated with satisfaction for some people, but negatively correlated for others, when these two types of people are combined, the relationship between similarity in interests and satisfaction may be cancelled out. Thus, research in this area may benefit from exploring individual differences in the dimensions of similarity that are related to satisfaction and outcome. Studies that have taken this approach have been promising.

One study conducted by Jamieson, Lydon, and Zanna (1987) looked at the effect of attitude and activity preference similarity on interpersonal attraction for individuals who differ on the trait of self-monitoring. Self-monitoring refers to a disposition in which one’s behavior is guided primarily by one’s internal cues or by one’s situation. Individuals whose behavior is situationally determined are high self-monitors, whereas those who act according to internal cues are low self-monitors. Results of Jamieson et al. (1987) revealed that in general, similarity in both attitudes and activity preference were predictors of initial attraction between persons. However, it was shown that self-monitoring moderated the effect of these two types of similarity on attraction. In particular, low self-monitors were more attracted to those similar to them in attitudes as opposed to activity preference, while high self-monitors had greater attraction for those similar in activity preference. The researchers went on to speculate about the possible reasons for the pattern they found. They pointed out that low self-monitors prefer doing varied activities with a few carefully selected and well-liked partners (Snyder, Gangestad, & Simpson, 1983). This suggests that these individuals probably seek out dispositionally congruent partners with whom they can “be themselves”. On the other hand, high self-monitors are said to have many partners who are then matched with specific activities and situations (Snyder & Gangestad, 1982). The authors deduced from this finding that high
self-monitors look for partners with whom they can establish satisfying situation specific exchanges.

Lewak, Wakefield, and Briggs (1985) also examined the effect of different types of similarity utilizing an individual differences approach. They looked at the effect of personality and intelligence similarity on attraction and relationship satisfaction for clinical and non-clinical couples. Both groups of couples showed significant associations between both intelligence and personality similarity, and attraction. There was, however, no significant relationship between the two types of similarity in general and marital satisfaction. Nonetheless, similarity in a few personality variables was related to satisfaction for the different groups. In the non-clinical sample, similarity on the Depression scale of the MMPI-II was related to the satisfaction of both husbands and wives, while similarity on the Hypochondriasis scale was related to wives' satisfaction only. In the clinical sample, similarity on the Fake Bad scale was associated with both partners' satisfaction.

Shibazaki and Brennan (1998) conducted a study in which they looked at the effect of ethnic similarity in determining relationship satisfaction for inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic couples. Results found no significant relationship between the type of couple and levels of relationship satisfaction. Couples in same-ethnic and inter-ethnic relationships reported similar levels of satisfaction with their relationships. These results provide indirect support for our similarity hypothesis in that perhaps individuals in same-ethnic relationships value similarity on the dimension of ethnicity, and their satisfaction is due in part to fulfillment of that need. On the other hand, those in inter-ethnic
relationships probably do not see similarity in ethnicity as being important, and therefore dissimilarity on this dimension does not diminish their satisfaction.

**Current Study**

The proposed study also sought to examine the effect of specific dimensions of similarity on relationship satisfaction and outcome from an individual differences perspective. However, whereas the aforementioned studies have looked at broad personality traits (e.g., low and high self-monitors) with respect to different dimensions of similarity (e.g., activity preference and attitudes), the current study looked for even more specific effects. In contrast to previous studies, the present study investigated whether satisfaction and outcome are significantly associated with participant-partner correspondence on the dimensions of similarity that participants deem as important. That is, different individuals might value different types of similarity – relative to others – in their partners. Relationship satisfaction and outcome for these persons would, therefore, vary as a function of whether their partner is similar to the participant on those particular important dimensions. For example, this model would predict that someone who values similarity in religious values is likely to be satisfied in a relationship in which his/her partner has corresponding religious values. On the other hand, similarity in recreational interests may be completely unrelated to this person’s satisfaction. Conversely, a person who deems similarity in recreational interests as being important would be satisfied if his/her partner shared such interests, while similarity in religious values would be irrelevant to his/her level of satisfaction. This approach, therefore, advances the level of precision in our understanding of the relation between similarity and both relationship satisfaction and outcome.
In addition, our study sought to test a possible mediator of the relationship between correspondence on preferred dimensions of similarity and satisfaction. Specifically, social exchange theory offers a possible framework for understanding how similarity ultimately impacts relationship satisfaction and outcome. As was previously indicated, social exchange theory postulates that individuals engage in an ongoing process of weighing the benefits of their relationship against the costs. Thereafter, they compare the cost-benefit distribution of their current relationship with what they could expect from alternative relationships (Floyd & Wasner, 1994; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Ratings of satisfaction of one’s relationship would, therefore, be based on the perception that the benefits outweigh the costs, and also that alternative relationships would be less rewarding (Floyd & Wasner, 1994; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). The link between similarity and social exchange, according to our model, is that having a partner who is similar to oneself, especially in the areas one deems as most important, is experienced as highly rewarding. As a result, the cost-benefit analysis of such a relationship would likely yield a perception that rewards are greater than costs, and that alternative relationships would not be as rewarding. This perception would then translate into feelings of satisfaction with one’s relationship.

The current study was a longitudinal study. Participants completed measures of attitudes/values, interests, personality, ethnicity, and religiosity. In addition, participants completed a questionnaire rating their partner on each of the aforementioned dimensions. Further, participants rated the importance of partner similarity on each of the dimensions. Finally, participants completed measures of social exchange, relationship satisfaction, and relationship outcome.
Studies have found that perceived similarity accounts for a greater proportion of the variance in relationship satisfaction than does actual similarity (Arias & O’Leary, 1985; Jones & Stanton, 1988). Therefore, the present study examined the construct of similarity in terms of perceived similarity rather than actual similarity. Indices of perceived similarity for attitudes/values, interests, and personality were derived by computing intra-class correlations between participants’ ratings of self and participants’ ratings of partner on those measures. These correlations are computed for each subject separately, and items for participant and partner ratings are treated as independent observations of each variable. Similarity in religious orientation and ethnicity were based on a dichotomous coding of whether participants’ rating of self and partner were alike or different on these dimensions. Social exchange was assessed by a measure of perceptions of alternatives and a measure of cost-benefit comparison. Relationship satisfaction was assessed by a widely-used measure of relationship satisfaction. Finally, outcome was assessed based on a dichotomous rating of whether the couple was still together after six weeks and if so, whether the relationship was less stable, the same, or more stable than before.

The following analyses were conducted in order to assess the relation between Importance x Similarity interactions and relationship satisfaction and outcome. A series of hierarchical regression analyses were performed at Time 1, in which the criterion variable was relationship satisfaction. In step 1, similarity for each of the dimensions (i.e., personality, attitudes and interests, ethnicity, and religious orientation) and rated importance of each dimension were entered. The interaction of these variables was entered in step 2. It was hypothesized that perceived partner similarity on the dimensions
of similarity that individuals value as important would influence their relationship satisfaction as indicated by significant Similarity x Importance interactions. At Time 2, the criterion variable was relationship outcome, and a series of discriminant function analyses were performed. It was hypothesized that perceived partner similarity on the dimensions of similarity that individuals value as important would influence their relationship outcome. That is, we again predicted significant Similarity x Importance interactions.

Furthermore, it was hypothesized that social exchange (i.e., availability of alternatives and cost-benefit comparison) would mediate the relationship between perceived similarity on important dimensions and relationship satisfaction. In order to test whether social exchange mediates between similarity on important dimensions and relationship satisfaction, we conducted mediational analyses using regression equations. Baron and Kenny (1986) developed three conditions that are necessary for demonstrating mediation. First, the predictor and criterion must be significantly related to each other. Next, the mediator and criterion must also be significantly associated. Lastly, when the hypothesized mediator is statistically controlled, the association between the predictor and criterion must be diminished. Therefore, it was hypothesized that perceived similarity on important dimensions would be significantly related to relationship satisfaction. Second, it was expected that social exchange and relationship satisfaction would be significantly related. And finally, it was predicted that when social exchange (perceived availability of alternatives and cost-benefit comparison) was statistically controlled, the relationship between similarity on important dimensions and relationship satisfaction would decrease.
CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

A total of 155 participants (Females = 104; Males = 51) were recruited from the Introduction to Psychology subject pool at the University of Dayton. Participants volunteered in exchange for course credit. All participants had to be involved in one and only one romantic relationship at the start of the study. Further, the participants were all involved in opposite-sex relationships. The average age of participants as well as partners was 20 years. The majority of participants were Caucasian (92%); 5% were Black; 2% were Hispanic; and 1% were from other ethnic groups. The average length of the participants’ relationships was 15 months. Attrition for the second part of the study was 45.

Instruments and Measures

Similarity

Similarity on the dimensions of personality, attitudes, and interests was calculated using intra-class correlations between participant ratings of self and participant ratings of partner on each of the dimensions. Similarity in religious orientation and ethnicity was based on a dichotomous coding of whether participants’ rating of self and partner were alike or different on these dimensions.
**Demographics.** Measures of religious orientation and ethnicity were included on a demographic data sheet. Participants completed two versions of these measures, one in which they rated themselves and one in which they rated their partner. Religious orientation was assessed by a single nominal measure in which participants chose from the following: Catholic, Protestant, Methodist, Baptist, Jewish, Muslim, Hindi, Buddhist, Other, None. Ethnicity of participants and partners was assessed using a single nominal measure in which participants selected from the following list of ethnic groups: Caucasian, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and Arab. This demographic data sheet can be found in Appendix A.

**Personality.** The Interpersonal Adjective Scale-Revised (IASR-B5; Trapnell & Wiggins, 1990) was used to assess the participants’ and their partners’ Big-5 personality characteristics (i.e., neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness). Participants completed two versions of the instrument, one in which they rated themselves and one in which they rated their partner. The measure is comprised of a list of 92 adjectives that respondents rate in terms of how accurately each describes them. Ratings on a 7-point Likert scale range from 1 (“extremely inaccurate”) to 7 (“extremely accurate”). The IASR-B5 contains five subscales, one for each of the Big-5 personality traits. The Extraversion and Agreeableness subscales contain 16 items each (subscale scores range from 16 to 112), and the Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness subscales contain 20 items each (subscale scores range from 20 to 140). Subscale scores for the Big-5 traits were used in analyzing this variable.

Trapnell and Wiggins (1990) investigated the psychometric properties of the IASR-B5. They found that the scales of the IASR-B5 demonstrated good internal
consistency, with values ranging from .87 to .94. These scales were also shown to have good convergent validity with the scales of the NEO-PI and the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI), (Trapnell & Wiggins, 1990). Trapnell and Wiggins (1990) also found that the factor loadings of the IASR-B5 scales were correspondent to the Five Factor model of personality. In addition, the IAS has been used in relation to a number of different individual difference measures in the areas of social psychology and personality (Wiggins & Broughton, 1985). For instance Buss and Barnes (1986) used this measure in research on preferences in mate selection, and Gifford and O’Connor (1987) used it in a study rating nonverbal social behavior. Cronbach’s alpha for the Big-5 traits in the current study ranged from .77 (extraversion) to .91 (conscientiousness) for participants, and from .74 (extraversion) to .94 (conscientiousness) for partners. The IASR-B5 can be found in Appendix B.

Attitudes and Interests. Participants’ and partners’ attitudes and interests were measured using a modified version of the Byrne 56-Item attitude scale (Byrne, 1971). Once again, participants completed two versions of this measure, one in which they rated themselves and the other in which they rated their partner. The items contain a range of six statements denoting varying levels of support and disagreement on a particular topic. For example, “I dislike situation comedies very much” (0) to “I enjoy situation comedies very much” (5). Respondents choose the statement that best describes the position of the person being rated (i.e., self or partner) on a given topic. Analyses involved use of subscale scores. Adjustments to the measure consisted of adding and modifying items in order to make them more modern and relevant. Thirty-five items from the original scale were deleted, and sixteen new items were added. The modified scale contains a total of
37 items. The modified Byrne scale contains two subscales: one that taps attitudes (20 items) and another that taps interests (17 items). Scores on the attitude subscale range from 0 to 100 and scores on the interest subscale range from 0 to 85. The Byrne scale has been used to look at the relation of attitude similarity to attraction (Byrne, 1971). This measure can be found in Appendix C.

**Importance**

Importance of similarity was assessed using a single 5-point measure created for the purpose of this study. Participants rated the degree to which they value partner similarity on the nine variables (the Big-5 personality traits, attitudes, interests, ethnicity, and religious orientation), and they rated only themselves. Ratings and total scores range from 1 ("not at all") to 5 ("very much"). Participants rated the importance of similarity on personality, similarity on attitudes in general, on interests in general, ethnicity, and religious orientation. Each item was analyzed separately. This scale can be found in Appendix D.

**Relationship Satisfaction**

Participants' relationship satisfaction was measured using a modified version of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976). Participants completed one version of this scale: one in which they rated their own satisfaction. The DAS is comprised of four subscales (Affectional Expression, Dyadic Cohesion, Dyadic Consensus, and Dyadic Satisfaction) and contains items in which respondents rate different aspects of their relationship on a five-point scale. Different items on the DAS have different response labels, but all range from 1 to 5, such as 1 ("always disagree") to 5 ("always agree") and 1 ("all the time") to 5 ("never"). A total score was used in analyzing this variable. Total
scores range from 27 to 135. Modifications involved making the measure more relevant to dating couples as opposed to married couples and standardizing all responses on a five-point scale. A total of five items were deleted from the original measure, making the total number of items on the modified scale 27. It is believed that the modifications were justified because the DAS has been used in a number of studies on dating couples (e.g., Shapiro & Kroeger, 1991; Zak, Collins, Harper, & Masher, 1998). Internal consistency of the DAS is good, with values ranging from .70 for the 4-item Affectional Expression subscale to .95 for the complete instrument (Carey, Spector, Lantinga, & Krauss, 1993). Furthermore, the DAS demonstrates convergent validity with the Martial Adjustment Scale with a value of .87, and it showed divergent validity with the Marital Disaffection Scale with a value of .79 (Lem & Ivey, 2000). Factor analyses have failed to find four separate factors. Instead, only one general factor of satisfaction has been supported (Lem & Ivey, 2000). Cronbach’s alpha for the current study was .89. The DAS can be found in Appendix E.

Relationship Outcome

Relationship outcome was assessed at Time 2 using a 2-item measure that asked whether participants were still in their relationship (relationship status) and if so, how the relationship had changed over the last six weeks (relationship stability). Ratings for being in the relationship are 1 (“yes”) or 2 (“no”) and ratings for change range from 1 (more unstable) to 3 (more stable). Individual item scores were used for analyzing this variable. This scale can be found in Appendix F.
Social Exchange

Availability of alternatives. Availability of alternatives was measured using a single 7-point item created by Floyd and Wasner (1994). Participants completed this measure, and they only rated themselves. Participants made ratings of their level of confidence that an equally desirable alternative relationship was currently available. Ratings and total scores range from 1 (not at all confident) to 7 (totally confident). Consistent with social exchange theory, Floyd and Wasner (1994) found a negative relationship between this measure of perceived availability of alternatives and relationship satisfaction. The measure can be found in Appendix G.

Cost-benefit comparison. The cost-benefit ratio of relationships was measured using a modified version of a seven-point reward scale created by (Sprecher, 2001). Participants rated only themselves on this measure. Modifications consisted of adding an item to measure global perceptions of relationship costs. The modified scale contains two items, one in which participants rated the extent to which they perceived the relationship as rewarding, and the other in which they rated the extent to which they perceived it as taxing. Scores range from 1 (“very unrewarding”) to 7 (“very rewarding”) and from 1 (“not taxing at all”) to 7 (“very taxing”). Indices of cost-benefit comparison were calculated by computing a ratio of reward scores to cost scores. For instance, a reward rating of 7 and a cost rating of 3 would yield a cost-benefit index of 2.33. Index scores range from .14 to 7. The Sprecher global reward scale was shown to be correlated with another seven-item measure of relationship rewards (Sprecher, 2001) that is based on Foa and Foa’s (1974) classification of relationship resources (Sprecher, 2001).
Correlations ranged from .60 to .82. The modified scale can also be found in Appendix G.

**Procedures**

Participants completed measures of personality, attitudes/values, interests, ethnicity, and religious orientation. They also completed partner ratings on the same five measures. Furthermore, participants completed questionnaires rating how important it is for their partner to be similar on each of the five measures. They then filled out measures of social exchange (i.e., perceived availability of alternative relationships and cost-benefit assessment of current relationship) and relationship satisfaction. Demographic measures always came first in the questionnaire packet. Measures of importance followed the measures to be used for calculating similarity (i.e., attitudes and interests, personality) half of the time and came prior to these measures the other half of the time. The order of the other questionnaires was randomized using a Latin square procedure starting with the following order: personality, attitudes and interests, satisfaction, perceived availability of alternatives, and cost-benefit comparison. Lastly, participants completed a measure of relationship outcome after a six-week follow-up. This follow-up was done via e-mail. The participants were then thanked and debriefed.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

The means, standard deviations, and ranges of continuous variables analyzed in the current study are presented in Table 1. Table 2 summarizes the frequencies and percentages for the nominal and ordinal level variables. Preliminary analyses were carried out in order to determine the relation between demographic variables and the primary criterion variables (i.e., relationship satisfaction and relationship outcome). Results of correlations between satisfaction and continuous demographics indicated that participant \( r = -0.11, p > .05 \) and partner age \( r = -0.06, p > .05 \) were not related to relationship satisfaction, while relationship length \( r = -0.19, p < .05 \) was negatively related to satisfaction. Analyses of variance between relationship satisfaction and nominal level demographic variables (i.e., participant and partner gender, participant and partner religion, and participant and partner ethnicity) were also conducted. Table 3 summarizes the results of these analyses. Only partner ethnicity, \( F(2, 151) = 3.25, p < .05 \), was significantly related to satisfaction. In order to determine whether unequal sample sizes across categories of partner ethnicity would have invalidated the ANOVA for this variable, tests were conducted on partner ethnicity to examine whether the integrity of the assumptions of independence, normality, and homogeneity of variances was preserved. Specifically, the Durbin-Watson test, \( d(2, 100) = 1.73 > d_{\text{critical}}(2, 100) \)
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<thead>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min.-Max</th>
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<td>-.52-.76</td>
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<td>Similarity extraversion</td>
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<td>.37</td>
<td>-.65-.89</td>
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<td>.30</td>
<td>-.43-.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Similarity conscientiousness</td>
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Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Nominal and Ordinal Level Study Measures

<table>
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<th>Variables</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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Table 3

Analyses of Variance between Relationship Satisfaction and Nominal Demographic Variables

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<th>Error WS</th>
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<td>269.35</td>
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<td>159.50</td>
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<td>147</td>
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*p < .05.  **p < .01.
= 1.65, indicated that independence was conserved, the Levene test (p > .05) confirmed homogeneity of variances, and a histogram graph illustrated normality. Therefore, the analysis of variance for partner ethnicity was determined to be valid. In order to avoid potential confounding effects of relationship length and partner ethnicity, these variables were included in the primary analyses as control variables. The results of analyses of variance between relationship outcome (status and stability, respectively) and continuous demographics showed that relationship length, F (1, 105) = 2.06, p > .05; F (2, 81) = 2.95, p > .05, participant age, F (1, 107) = 1.52, p > .05; F (2, 83) = 1.05, p > .05, and partner age, F (1, 107) = .60, p > .05; F (2, 83) = 1.81, p > .05 were not significantly related to either measure of outcome. Table 4 summarizes the results of chi-square tests conducted between relationship outcome and nominal level demographic variables (i.e., participant gender, partner gender, participant religion, partner religion, participant ethnicity, and partner ethnicity). These nominal variables were also not significantly related to any of the outcome measures.

The results of the correlations examining the relation between the different dimensions of similarity and relationship satisfaction are shown in Table 5. With the exception of similarity in agreeableness, religious orientation, and ethnicity, all the similarity variables were positively related to satisfaction. Specifically, similarity in neuroticism (r = .18, p < .05), extraversion (r = .38, p < .01), openness (r = .34, p < .01), conscientiousness (r = .30, p < .01), attitudes (r = .42, p < .01), and interests (r = .25, p < .01) had positive relationships with satisfaction. ANOVAS between the similarity variables and relationship outcome are summarized in Table 6. None of the similarity variables were related to relationship status. On the other hand, similarity in neuroticism,
Table 4

Chi-Square Analyses between Relationship Outcome and Nominal Demographic Variables

<table>
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<td>1.01</td>
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<td>4.33</td>
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</table>

*p < .05.  **p < .01.
Table 5

Zero-order Correlations Between Continuous Independent Variables and Relationship Satisfaction, and between Continuous Independent Variables and Social Exchange Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Rel. Satisfaction</th>
<th>Av. of alternatives</th>
<th>Cost-benefit</th>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.10</td>
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<td>Sim. extraversion</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. openness</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. conscientiousness</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. agreeableness</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. attitudes</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. interests</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. religion</td>
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<td>-.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. ethnicity</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>S x I neuroticism</td>
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<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I extraversion</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I openness</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I conscientiousness</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I agreeableness</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>S x I attitudes</td>
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<td>.33**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I interests</td>
<td>.29**</td>
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<td>.16</td>
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<td>-.06</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
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<td>S x I ethnicity</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Av. of alternatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost-benefit</td>
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*P < .05.  **p < .01.  ***p < .003

Note. Bonferoni correction for multiple comparisons = p < .003
Table 6
Analyses of Variance between Relationship Outcome and Continuous Independent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<th>df (Stability)</th>
<th>Error (Status)</th>
<th>Error (Stability)</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Stability</th>
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<td>.36 .08</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2 BS 82</td>
<td>.10 .14</td>
<td>.40 .12</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>3.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. openness</td>
<td>1 BS 105</td>
<td>2 BS 82</td>
<td>.06 .09</td>
<td>.13 .09</td>
<td>.61</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2 BS 82</td>
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<td>.14 .05</td>
<td>2.55</td>
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<td>2 BS 82</td>
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<td>.32 .07</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>4.61**</td>
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<td>.32 .22</td>
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<td>.05 .04</td>
<td>.08 .03</td>
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<td>2.39</td>
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<td>5.28 .99</td>
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<td>2.76 1.77</td>
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* p < .05.  **p < .01.  ***p < .002.

\[ F(2, 82) = 4.72, p = .01, \] similarity in extraversion, \[ F(2, 82) = 3.31, p < .05, \] and similarity in interests, \[ F(2, 82) = 4.61, \] had significant relationships with the stability measure of outcome.

**Similarity on Important Dimensions**

Zero-order correlations were calculated between the Similarity x Importance interactions and relationship satisfaction, as well as between the two social exchange variables and satisfaction. Table 5 depicts the results of these analyses. With the exception of religious orientation and ethnicity, all of the Similarity x Importance interactions were positively associated with relationship satisfaction. Specifically, Similarity x Importance of neuroticism \( (r = .18, p < .05) \), extraversion \( (r = .38, p < .01) \), openness \( (r = .36, p < .01) \), conscientiousness \( (r = .29, p < .01) \), agreeableness \( (r = .23, p < .01) \), attitudes \( (r = .37, p < .01) \), and interests \( (r = .29, p < .01) \) were significantly related to satisfaction. As was expected, cost-benefit assessment \( (r = .64, p < .01) \) was positively related to satisfaction and availability of alternatives \( (r = -.27, p < .01) \) was negatively related to satisfaction. In addition, analyses of variance were carried out between relationship outcome and the Similarity x Importance interactions. These results are presented in Table 6. The interaction for attitudes, \[ F(1, 105) = 4.78, p < .05, \] was significantly related to relationship status. In addition, Similarity x Importance in neuroticism, \[ F(2, 80) = 4.58, p = .01, \] and interests, \[ F(2, 81) = 5.36, p < .01, \] were significantly associated with relationship stability.

In order to test the hypothesis that matching on preferred dimensions of similarity would predict relationship satisfaction, five hierarchical regressions were performed with relationship satisfaction as the criterion: one for the Big-5 personality traits, attitudes,
interests, religious orientation, and ethnicity. The results of these regression analyses are summarized in Tables 7 through 11. Partner ethnicity and relationship length were entered in the first step of each analysis as control variables. In the second step, similarity in the respective variable along with importance of similarity on that dimension were entered. Finally, the respective Similarity x Importance interactions were entered on the third step. Results revealed that only the Similarity x Importance interaction for attitudes ($R^2_A = .02, p = .05$) was able to significantly predict satisfaction above and beyond similarity in attitudes and importance of similarity in attitudes. In order to determine the direction in which Similarity x Importance of attitudes predicted satisfaction, the medians for similarity in attitudes and importance of similarity in attitudes were first calculated. Thereafter, the two variables were recoded into dichotomous variables: similarity in attitudes (high and low) and importance of similarity in attitudes (high and low). Next, the means on the satisfaction variable for these four conditions were computed. Consistent with our hypothesis that matching on preferred dimensions of similarity would be associated with high levels of satisfaction, results indicated that when both similarity in attitudes and importance of similarity in attitudes were high, satisfaction was greatest ($M = 113.57$), compared to when similarity was high and importance was low ($M = 109.76$), when similarity was low and importance high ($M = 104.13$), and when similarity was low and importance low ($M = 103.56$). Although the interactions for the Big-5 traits as a set did not significantly add to the prediction of satisfaction ($R^2_A = .04, p > .05$), the Similarity x Importance interaction for agreeableness ($\beta = 1.14, p = .01$) was a significant predictor of satisfaction. Once again,
Table 7
Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Personality Traits

<table>
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<th>Sig.</th>
<th>R²Δ</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>-1.01</td>
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<td>-.30</td>
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<td>.08</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.**  R² = .06 for step 1; R² = .33 for step 2; R² = .37 for step 3.
**Table 8**

**Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Attitudes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>R-sq change</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rel. length</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-1.61</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>.08</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>.31</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sim. attitudes</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>S x I attitudes</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** $R^2 = .07$ for step 1; $R^2 = .25$ for step 2; $R^2 = .27$ for step 3.
Table 9

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>(R^2\Delta)</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>Step 1</td>
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<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>0.08</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-1.01</td>
<td>0.31</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. interests</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imp. interests</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.13</td>
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<td>Step 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>S x I interests</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \(R^2 = 0.07\) for step 1; \(R^2 = 0.15\) for step 2; \(R^2 = 0.15\) for step 3.
Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
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<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th></th>
<th>Sig.</th>
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<td>-1.61</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>African American</td>
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<td>1.49</td>
<td>.14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>.37</td>
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<td>.76</td>
<td>.45</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \( R^2 = .07 \) for step 1; \( R^2 = .09 \) for step 2; \( R^2 = .09 \) for step 3.
Table 11

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>$R^2 \Delta$</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rel. length</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-1.61</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sim. ethnicity</td>
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<td>-0.55</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imp. ethnicity</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>1.59</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I ethnicity</td>
<td>-.48</td>
<td>-.72</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = .07$ for step 1; $R^2 = .08$ for step 2; $R^2 = .09$ for step 3.
a median split was performed in order to determine the direction of the Similarity x Importance prediction. Similarity on agreeableness and importance of similarity in agreeableness were recoded into dichotomous variables with the levels being high and low. The means on the satisfaction variable of the four conditions were calculated and, consistent with our hypothesis, the results showed that when similarity in agreeableness and importance of such similarity were high, satisfaction was highest \( (M = 110.80) \), compared to when similarity was low and importance of similarity was low \( (M = 106.67) \), when similarity was low and importance high \( (M = 105.17) \), and when similarity was high and importance low \( (M = 100.55) \). The Similarity x Importance interactions for neuroticism, extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, interests, religious orientation, and ethnicity did not significantly predict satisfaction.

Discriminant function analyses were carried out in order to determine whether the Similarity x Importance interactions would uniquely predict relationship outcome. A summary of these analyses can be found in Tables 12 through 21. Five analyses were conducted with the status measure of outcome as the criterion variable. Each respective Similarity variable, importance of similarity on that dimension, and the given Similarity x Importance interaction were entered simultaneously for each analysis. The results revealed that none of the interactions (i.e., Big-5 personality traits, attitudes, interests, religious orientation, and ethnicity) were able to significantly predict relationship status. Five more analyses were carried out with relationship stability as the criterion. Again, each respective similarity variable, importance of similarity on that dimension, and the given Similarity x Importance interaction were entered simultaneously for each discriminant function. None of the interactions significantly predicted relationship stability.
### Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Status ("Together" vs. "Apart") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Personality Traits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Together&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Apart&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (1, 103)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. neuroticism</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. extraversion</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. openness</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. conscientiousness</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.23</td>
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<td>Sim. agreeableness</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>1.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imp. neuroticism</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. extraversion</td>
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<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.30</td>
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<td>Imp. openness</td>
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<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. conscientiousness</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. agreeableness</td>
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<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>S x I neuroticism</td>
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<td>.79</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>1.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>S x I extraversion</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I openness</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I conscientiousness</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I agreeableness</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05  **p < .01
Table 13
Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Status ("Together" vs. "Apart") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Together&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Apart&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (1, 105)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. attitudes</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. attitudes</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>2.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>S x I attitudes</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>4.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Table 14

**Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Status** ("Together" vs. "Apart") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Together&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Apart&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (1, 105)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. interests</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. interests</td>
<td>-.39</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I interests</td>
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<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.  **p < .01.
Table 15

**Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Status ("Together" vs. "Apart") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Religion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Together&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Apart&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (1, 106)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. religion</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. religion</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I religion</td>
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<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01.*
Table 16

**Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Status ("Together" vs. "Apart") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Together&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Apart&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (1, 106)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. ethnicity</td>
<td>-.53</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. ethnicity</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I ethnicity</td>
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<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.  **p < .01.
Table 17

Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Stability (“Less Stable” vs. “Same” vs. “More Stable”) from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Personality Traits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>“Less Stable” Mean</th>
<th>“Same” Mean</th>
<th>“More Stable” Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (2, 80)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. neuroticism</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>4.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. extraversion</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>3.21</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.48</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. conscientiousness</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. agreeableness</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. neuroticism</td>
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<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. extraversion</td>
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<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>.68</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imp. conscientiousness</td>
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<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>1.69</td>
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<td>3.84</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I neuroticism</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I extraversion</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I openness</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I conscientiousness</td>
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<td>.68</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I agreeableness</td>
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<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Table 18  
Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Stability ("Less Stable" vs. "Same" vs. "More Stable") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Less Stable&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Same&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;More Stable&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (2, 81)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. attitudes</td>
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<td>.62</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. attitudes</td>
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<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I attitudes</td>
<td>-.59</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05,  **p < .01.
Table 19

Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Stability ("Less Stable" vs. "Same" vs. "More Stable") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Less Stable&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Same&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;More Stable&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (2, 81)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. interests</td>
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<td>.45</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. interests</td>
<td>-.30</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I interests</td>
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<td>1.61</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>5.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Table 20

**Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Stability (“Less Stable” vs. “Same” vs. “More Stable”) from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Religion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>“Less Stable” Mean</th>
<th>“Same” Mean</th>
<th>“More Stable” Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (2, 82)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. religion</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. religion</td>
<td>-.48</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I religion</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01.*
Table 21

**Discriminant Function Analysis Predicting Relationship Stability ("Less Stable" vs. "Same" vs. "More Stable") from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations w/ Dis. Functions</th>
<th>&quot;Less Stable&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;Same&quot; Mean</th>
<th>&quot;More Stable&quot; Mean</th>
<th>Univariate F (2, 82)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sim. ethnicity</td>
<td>-.46</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. ethnicity</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I ethnicity</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05.  **p < .01.
Social Exchange as Mediator

As was indicated earlier, Baron and Kenny (1986) developed three conditions that are necessary for demonstrating mediation. First, the predictor and criterion must be significantly related to each other. Next, the mediator and criterion must also be significantly associated. Lastly, when the hypothesized mediator is statistically controlled, the association between the predictor and criterion must be diminished. As Similarity x Importance of agreeableness and attitudes were the only significant predictors of satisfaction in earlier regression analyses, these were the only variables examined with regard to the mediation hypothesis. In terms of the first condition of mediation, recall that the correlations between satisfaction and both Similarity x Importance in agreeableness (r = .23, p < .01) and attitudes (r = .37, p < .01) were significant. Further, a hierarchical multiple regression was performed with satisfaction as the criterion. The results of this analysis are depicted in Table 22. On the first step, relationship length and partner ethnicity were entered as control variables. On the second step, similarity in agreeableness and attitudes, and importance of similarity on those dimensions were entered. Lastly, the Similarity x Importance interactions for agreeableness and attitudes were entered on the third step. The results showed that the interactions ($R^2_\Delta = .09, p < .01$) were significant predictors of satisfaction, suggesting that the first condition of mediation was met. In terms of the second mediation condition, the relationships between satisfaction and the two mediator variables were also significant: cost-benefit assessment (r = .64, p < .01) was positively related to satisfaction and availability of alternatives (r = -.27, p < .01) was negatively related to satisfaction. In addition, a second hierarchical multiple regression procedure was performed with satisfaction as the criterion. Table 23 summarizes these results. Relationship length and partner ethnicity were again entered as control variables in the first step. Availability of
Table 22

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Agreeableness and Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>$R^2 \Delta$</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rel. length</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-1.57</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-1.77</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. agreeableness</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. attitudes</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. agreeableness</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. attitudes</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I attitudes</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I agreeableness</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2 = .07$ for step 1; $R^2 = .24$ for step 2; $R^2 = .33$ for step 3.
Table 23

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Social Exchange Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>R² Δ</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rel. length</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-1.60</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-1.78</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. of alternatives</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>8.78</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-benefit</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-1.71</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* R² = .07 for step 1; R² = .44 for step 2.
alternatives and cost-benefit assessment were then entered on the second step. The results indicated that the social exchange variables ($R^2 \Delta = .37, p < .01$) significantly predicted satisfaction, which indicates that the second condition of mediation was fulfilled. A final regression was carried out to test the third condition for mediation. These results are presented in Table 24. Relationship length, partner ethnicity, similarity in agreeableness and attitudes, and importance of similarity on those dimensions were entered in the first step. On the second step, cost-benefit assessment and availability of alternatives were entered. On the third step, the Similarity x Importance interactions for agreeableness and attitudes were entered. This analysis showed that the interactions ($R^2 \Delta = .04, p = .01$) still remained significant predictors of satisfaction, suggesting that social exchange did not mediate the relation between satisfaction and the importance of similarity in agreeableness and attitudes.
Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Relationship Satisfaction from Similarity x Importance Interactions for Agreeableness and Attitudes, controlling for Social Exchange Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>R² Δ</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rel. length</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-1.39</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>-2.54</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.99</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. agreeableness</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sim. attitudes</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. agreeableness</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. attitudes</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. of alternatives</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-benefit</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I attitudes</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S x I agreeableness</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* R² = .24 for step 1; R² = .47 for step 2; R² = .51 for step 3.
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION

It is well-established in the research literature that interpersonal similarity is a strong predictor of romantic relationship satisfaction and outcome (White & Hatcher, 1984). The current study sought to advance our understanding of the role of similarity by looking at individual differences in the relation between similarity and satisfaction and outcome. Although previous studies (e.g., Jamieson, Lydon, & Zanna, 1987) have taken this type of individual difference approach by examining the effect of specific types of similarity for different groups of individuals (e.g., high versus low self-monitors), the current study looked at even more specific effects. It investigated the relation between specific dimensions of similarity particular individuals value in their partner and relationship satisfaction and outcome. Furthermore, it was proposed that social exchange (i.e., availability of alternatives and cost-benefit assessment) acts as a mediator in the relationship between similarity on important dimensions and relationship satisfaction.

The first hypothesis was that similarity on valued dimensions would predict relationship satisfaction above and beyond specific types of similarity alone. In order to test this hypothesis, five sets of hierarchical regression analyses were conducted with relationship satisfaction as the criterion. The respective predictors for each regression were the Similarity x Importance interactions for the Big-5 personality traits, attitudes,
interests, religious orientation, and ethnicity. The results revealed that only two interactions were able to significantly predict satisfaction. While the Big-5 interactions as a block did not add significantly to the prediction of satisfaction, the interaction for agreeableness did. In addition, the Similarity x Importance interaction for attitudes also emerged as a significant predictor.

It is quite interesting that agreeableness and attitudes, but not the other similarity variables, yielded significant Similarity x Importance interactions. These constructs are similar in that they both denote personal values and conceptualizations about the world. Agreeableness, in part, taps the liberal versus conservative worldview in that it generally refers to the degree to which a person is altruistic versus individualistic (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Attitudes as assessed in the current study encompasses a very broad range of values and belief systems, including political, religious, and economic principles. It appears, then, that individuals who find it important to have a partner whose worldview matches their own are more likely to be satisfied when their partner is indeed similar on that dimension. Perhaps Similarity x Importance in worldview adds significantly to satisfaction because matching on worldview causes the individuals in question to feel more understood by their partner. For others, it might not be important for them to feel understood by their partner, or alternatively, feeling understood may not be tied to similarity in worldview for them.

The second hypothesis we advanced was that similarity on important dimensions would be significant predictors of relationship outcome. We tested this hypothesis by conducting discriminant function analyses similar to the regressions outlined above, with
the exception that the criterion variable was now relationship outcome. None of the interactions (i.e., Big-5 personality traits, attitudes, interests, religious orientation, and ethnicity) significantly predicted any of the two measures of outcome (i.e., relationship status and relationship stability).

One likely reason for the results relating to outcome could be that the sample size was too small to detect the hypothesized effects. The number of independent variables included in the analyses would have required a minimum of 150 participants to find results. However, with an attrition of 45 subjects for the second part of the study in which relationship outcome was assessed, the total number of subjects was only 110.

Our third hypothesis was that social exchange acts as a mediator between similarity on important dimensions and relationship satisfaction. In essence, we proposed that similarity on valued dimensions would amount to a substantial reward in one’s relationship, and would, therefore, result in a favorable cost-benefit assessment of the relationship. That assessment would, in turn, translate to greater relationship satisfaction. To test this hypothesis, we statistically controlled the social exchange variables. In essence, we removed the mechanism by which Similarity x Importance was believed to predict satisfaction. As such, we expected that the interactions would no longer be a significant predictor of satisfaction. However, the interactions were still able to significantly predict satisfaction, which suggests that social exchange did not mediate the relation between similarity on important dimensions and satisfaction.

Perhaps social exchange is but one of multiple factors that could explain the relationship between similarity on valued dimensions and satisfaction. In the case of Similarity x Importance in agreeableness, it is probably not a factor at all, since the
associations between the agreeableness interaction and the social exchange variables were non-significant. It is entirely possible, however, that social exchange accounts for some of the variance in satisfaction when the predictor is Similarity x Importance in attitudes because the latter interaction did have significant relationships with both social exchange variables. Nonetheless, it is likely that there is another variable, or more realistically, a combination of other variables that is largely responsible for the link between similarity on preferred dimensions and satisfaction. For instance, it is possible that similarity in important characteristics is a source of motivation for individuals to put more effort into their relationships. That effort would result in increased use of maintenance behaviors, which has already been shown to enhance satisfaction (Stafford & Canary, 1991). In addition, similarity on valued dimensions, wordview in particular, might also serve to enhance communication between couple members, which is another factor that has been linked to satisfaction (Meeks, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998).

There are a number of methodological considerations that may have placed limitations on this study. Sample size is one such factor. Based on the number of variables analyzed, a sample size of at least 150 participants would have been needed for optimal statistical power. Although 155 participants were recruited for the first part of the study, this number barely met the minimum optimal sample size requirement. As such, it is believed that this limited sample size might have contributed to findings that only 2 of the 9 interactions tested significantly predicted satisfaction. The second part of the study - in which relationship outcome was the criterion - had even bigger sample size problems. An attrition of 45 subjects left only 110 participants remaining in the study, which made it virtually impossible to have sufficient power to find effects. It is
concluded, therefore, that a larger sample size would have increased our ability to detect effects for the non-significant predictors in both parts of the study if such effects were present. In addition, a larger sample would strengthen confidence in the generalizability of the findings to other samples.

Another possible limitation of our study was the way in which we measured importance of similarity on the various dimensions (i.e., Big-5 personality traits, attitudes, interests, religious orientation, and ethnicity). We only had one importance item per variable, which in some cases might not have been adequate to accurately tap importance of similarity for certain constructs. This consideration is particularly relevant for complex constructs, such as neuroticism and conscientiousness, which probably cannot be tapped in a simple statement. Perhaps modifying the importance measure such that there would be 2 or 3 items tapping importance of similarity on each given variable would have enhanced our chances for finding significant results. Another possibility is that some people may not be aware of what dimensions of similarity they find important. Therefore, more sophisticated methodologies, such as in-vivo scenarios between participant and partner, would be necessary in order to assess importance of similarity.

A final methodological consideration that might have adversely affected our findings is the approach we took in measuring similarity. We looked at perceived similarity because research has shown this to be a strong predictor of satisfaction. However, actual similarity has also been found to be a good predictor of satisfaction (Burleson & Denton, 1992). Therefore, we might have had different results had we looked at actual rather than perceived similarity.
There are a number of ways in which research on individual differences in the relationship between similarity and satisfaction in romantic relationships could be extended in future research. For instance, it would be interesting to see whether a married sample differs from a non-married sample in the dimensions of similarity that are related to satisfaction. In other words, one might expect to find that marital status moderates the relationship between certain dimensions of similarity, such as similarity in conscientiousness or similarity in interests, and satisfaction. When couples get married and start cohabitating, many of them probably engage in more joint social and recreational activities than dating couples and, hence, some of these couples may place greater importance on similarity in interests while others may not. As such, it is possible that similarity in interests would significantly predict satisfaction for married couples who value such similarity, but not the satisfaction of dating couples. Similarly, some married couples may come to value similarity in conscientiousness (i.e., degree of planfulness and organization) because they would likely be working together to achieve common responsibilities and goals (e.g., household and financial management). Therefore, a matched approach for handling such responsibilities and pursuits might be considered important for these couples, which may enhance satisfaction when such similarity in conscientiousness is present. On the other hand, similarity in conscientiousness would not necessarily predict satisfaction for dating couples.

Another area of investigation could be whether the prediction of satisfaction from different dimensions of similarity differs for different groups, such as males and females. Perhaps gender acts as a moderator in the relation between certain types of similarity and satisfaction. It might be the case that some females value similarity in emotion-related
characteristics, such as extraversion and neuroticism. Therefore, one might expect that similarity on those traits would be significant predictors of satisfaction for females who prefer such similarity, but not for males. Conversely, some males may consider similarity in attitudes and interests as being important while others may not. As such, similarity in attitudes and interests would be likely to predict satisfaction for those males who value similarity on those dimensions, but not for females.

It might also be useful to examine whether the ability of similarity on valued dimensions to predict satisfaction changes over time. It is possible that similarity on valued dimensions only adds significantly to satisfaction during the early stages of a relationship. Perhaps over a period of time, similarity on once valued dimensions becomes something to which people grow accustomed and eventually take for granted. As a result, those Similarity x Importance interactions may no longer be able to significantly predict satisfaction.

As was previously mentioned, research looking at the role of similarity in relationship satisfaction and outcome has been moving in the direction of investigating more specific effects of similarity. That is to say, recent studies have been looking more and more at specific types or dimensions of similarity (e.g., Burleson & Denton, 1992) and at group differences in the relation between similarity and satisfaction and outcome (e.g., Jamieson, Lydon, & Zanna, 1987). It is believed that our study has added even more precision to the similarity research by looking at how individual preferences for certain types of similarity interact with such dimensions of similarity to predict satisfaction and outcome. Furthermore, our findings that Similarity x Importance interactions - albeit only for agreeableness and attitudes - add significantly to the
prediction of satisfaction can be considered an important advancement in the understanding of similarity’s contribution to relationship satisfaction. It would, therefore, be worthwhile for future research to replicate and extend the investigation of this novel concept of similarity on preferred dimensions as it relates to relationship satisfaction and outcome.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Demographics

1. Please indicate the initials of your partner in the space provided.
   
2. Please indicate the length of your relationship with the person mentioned above.
   
3. What is your gender?
   
   ____ Male  ____ Female

4. What is your age?
   
5. What is the gender of your partner?
   
   ____ Male  ____ Female

6. What is your partner's age?
   
   ____ Male  ____ Female

7. Which of the following best describes your religious orientation? Choose one.
   
   ___ Catholic
   ___ Jewish
   ___ Protestant
   ___ Methodist
   ___ Baptist
   ___ Muslim
   ___ Hindi
   ___ Buddhist
   ___ Other
   ___ None

8. Which of the following best describes your ethnic background? Choose one.
   
   ___ Black
   ___ Hispanic
   ___ Caucasian
   ___ Asian
   ___ Arab
   ___ Native American
9. Which of the following best describes your partner’s religious orientation? Choose one.
   ___ Catholic
   ___ Jewish
   ___ Protestant
   ___ Methodist
   ___ Baptist
   ___ Muslim
   ___ Hindi
   ___ Buddhist
   ___ Other
   ___ None

10. Which of the following best describes your partner’s ethnic background? Choose one.
    ___ Black
    ___ Hispanic
    ___ Caucasian
    ___ Asian
    ___ Arab
    ___ Native American
**APPENDIX B**

*The Interpersonal Adjective Scale - Revised*

The following is a list of adjectives that can be used to describe people. Please rate each adjective in terms of how well it describes you. Make these ratings on a 1 to 7 scale with 1 being very unlike you and 7 being very like you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>very unlike me</th>
<th>very like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- E dominant
- RS O conventional
- RS O unphilosophical
- N tense
- RS C inefficient
- RS A cruel
- A tender-hearted
- C planful
- RS E meek
- C thorough
- RS N calm
- RS O uncomplex
- N high-strung
- A kind
- E persistent
- RS E shy
- RS N at ease
- RS C unorderly
- N worrying
- RS N unself-conscious
- N overexcitable
- RS E unbold
- RS E unaggressive
- RS C undisciplined
- C organized
- O questioning
- RS E unauthoritative
- RS N unanxious
- O philosophical
- RS O unreflective
- RS C disorganized
- RS C untidy
- RS N unagitated
- RS A unsympathetic
- A iron-hearted
- C reliable
- RS C forgetful
- RS O unimaginative
- RS A uncharitable
- RS C unplanful
- RS O unartistic
- E assertive
- C orderly
- A warmthless
very unlike me

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>E</em> firm</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>C</em> unsystematic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O</em> inquisitive</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>E</em> domineering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>C</em> unreliable</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>E</em> bashful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O</em> imaginative</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>A</em> sympathetic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>C</em> neat</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>O</em> unliterary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A</em> tender</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>E</em> forceful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>N</em> nervous</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>A</em> accommodating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A</em> charitable</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>O</em> unconventional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>N</em> stable</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>O</em> unabstract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>E</em> timid</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>C</em> efficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>A</em> cold-hearted</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>C</em> impractical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>A</em> ruthless</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>E</em> self-confident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>N</em> hypersensitive</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>C</em> systematic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>N</em> unmoody</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>A</em> gentle-hearted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>O</em> unsearching</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>E</em> self-assured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>C</em> tidy</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>E</em> forceless</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>O</em> uninquisitive</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>A</em> soft-hearted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>N</em> anxious</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>O</em> reflective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O</em> abstract-thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>O</em> literary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>O</em> broad-minded</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>N</em> unanxious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>N</em> unnervous</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>O</em> individualistic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>N</em> self-conscious</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>N</em> fretful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>N</em> unworring</td>
<td>RS</td>
<td><em>N</em> relaxed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>N</em> guilt-prone</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>C</em> self-disciplined</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

_E= Extraversion   _A=Agreeableness   _C=Conscientiousness
_N= Neuroticism   _O=Openness to experience

*Trapnell and Wiggins (1990).*
APPENDIX C

Modified Byrne Attitude Scale

Respond to each of the following items by checking the response choice that best describes your response to each statement.

1. Situation Comedies (check one) - I
   ___ I dislike situation comedies very much.
   ___ I dislike situation comedies.
   ___ I dislike situation comedies to a slight degree.
   ___ I enjoy situation comedies to a slight degree.
   ___ I enjoy situation comedies.
   ___ I enjoy situation comedies very much.

2. Belief in God (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ I strongly believe that there is a God
   ___ I believe that there is a God.
   ___ I feel that perhaps there is a God.
   ___ I feel that perhaps there is no God.
   ___ I believe that there is no God.
   ___ I strongly believe that there is no God.

3. Smoking (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ In general, I am very much in favor of smoking.
   ___ In general, I am in favor of smoking.
   ___ In general, I am mildly in favor of smoking.
   ___ In general, I am mildly against smoking.
   ___ In general, I am against smoking.
   ___ In general, I am very much against smoking.

4. Acting spontaneously vs. Careful Consideration of Alternatives (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ I feel that it is better if people always act spontaneously.
   ___ I feel that it is better if people usually act spontaneously.
   ___ I feel that it is better if people often act spontaneously.
   ___ I feel that it is better if people often engage in a careful consideration of alternatives.
   ___ I feel that it is better if people usually engage in a careful consideration of alternatives.
   ___ I feel that it is better if people always engage in a careful consideration of alternatives.
5. Classical Music (check one) - I
   ____ I dislike classical music very much.
   ____ I dislike classical music.
   ____ I dislike classical music to a slight degree.
   ____ I enjoy classical music to a slight degree.
   ____ I enjoy classical music.
   ____ I enjoy classical music very much.

6. American Way of Life (check one) - A
   ____ I strongly believe that the American way of life is not the best.
   ____ I believe that the American way of life is not the best.
   ____ I feel that perhaps the American way of life is not the best.
   ____ I feel that perhaps the American way of life is the best.
   ____ I strongly believe that the American way of life is the best.

7. Sports (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I enjoy sports very much.
   ____ I enjoy sports.
   ____ I enjoy sports to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike sports to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike sports.
   ____ I dislike sports very much.

8. Science Fiction (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I enjoy science fiction very much.
   ____ I enjoy science fiction.
   ____ I enjoy science fiction to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike science fiction to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike science fiction.
   ____ I dislike science fiction very much.

9. Money (check one) - A
   ____ I strongly believe that money is not one of the most important goals in life.
   ____ I believe that money is not one of the most important goals in life.
   ____ I feel that perhaps money is not one of the most important goals in life.
   ____ I feel that perhaps money is one of the most important goals in life.
   ____ I believe that money is one of the most important goals in life.
   ____ I strongly believe that money is one of the most important goals in life.
10. Welfare Legislation (check one) – A
   ____ I am very much opposed to increased welfare legislation.
   ____ I am opposed to increased welfare legislation.
   ____ I am mildly in favor of increased welfare legislation.
   ____ I am mildly in favor of increased welfare legislation.
   ____ I am in favor of increased welfare legislation.
   ____ I am very much in favor of increased welfare legislation.

11. Creative Work (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I enjoy doing creative work very much.
   ____ I enjoy doing creative work.
   ____ I enjoy doing creative work to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike doing creative work to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike doing creative work.
   ____ I dislike doing creative work very much.

12. Novels (check one) - I
   ____ I dislike reading novels very much.
   ____ I dislike reading novels.
   ____ I dislike reading novels to a slight degree.
   ____ I enjoy reading novels to a slight degree.
   ____ I enjoy reading novels.
   ____ I enjoy reading novels very much.

13. War (check one) – A (RS)
   ____ I strongly feel that war is sometimes necessary to solve world problems.
   ____ I feel that war is sometimes necessary to solve world problems.
   ____ I feel that perhaps war is sometimes necessary to solve world problems.
   ____ I feel that perhaps war is never necessary to solve world problems.
   ____ I feel that war is never necessary to solve world problems.
   ____ I strongly feel that war is never necessary to solve world problems.

14. Pets (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I enjoy keeping pets very much.
   ____ I enjoy keeping pets.
   ____ I enjoy keeping pets to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike keeping pets to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike keeping pets.
   ____ I dislike keeping pets very much.
15. Foreign Movies (check one) – I (RS)
   _____ I enjoy foreign movies very much.
   _____ I enjoy foreign movies.
   _____ I enjoy foreign movies to a slight degree.
   _____ I dislike foreign movies to a slight degree.
   _____ I dislike foreign movies.
   _____ I dislike foreign movies very much.

16. Strict Discipline (check one) - A
   _____ I am very much against strict disciplining of children.
   _____ I am against strict disciplining of children.
   _____ I am mildly against strict disciplining of children.
   _____ I am mildly in favor of strict disciplining of children.
   _____ I am in favor of strict disciplining of children.
   _____ I am very much in favor of strict disciplining of children.

17. College Education (check one) – A (RS)
   _____ I strongly believe it is very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   _____ I believe it is very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   _____ I believe that perhaps it is very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   _____ I believe that perhaps it is not very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   _____ I believe that it is not very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   _____ I strongly believe that it is not very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.

18. Divorce (check one) - A
   _____ I am very much opposed to divorce.
   _____ I am opposed to divorce.
   _____ I am mildly opposed to divorce.
   _____ I am mildly in favor of divorce.
   _____ I am in favor of divorce.
   _____ I am very much in favor of divorce.

19. Dancing (check one) – I (RS)
   _____ I enjoy dancing very much.
   _____ I enjoy dancing.
   _____ I enjoy dancing to a slight degree.
   _____ I dislike dancing to a slight degree.
   _____ I dislike dancing.
   _____ I dislike dancing very much.
20. Family Finances (check one) – A (RS)
   ____ I strongly believe that the man in the family should handle the finances.
   ____ I believe that the man in the family should handle the finances.
   ____ I feel that perhaps the man in the family should handle the finances.
   ____ I feel that perhaps the woman in the family should handle the finances.
   ____ I believe that the woman in the family should handle the finances.
   ____ I strongly believe that the woman in the family should handle the finances.

21. Romantic Comedies (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I enjoy romantic comedies very much.
   ____ I enjoy romantic comedies.
   ____ I enjoy romantic comedies to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike romantic comedies to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike romantic comedies.
   ____ I dislike romantic comedies very much.

22. Traveling (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I enjoy traveling very much.
   ____ I enjoy traveling.
   ____ I enjoy traveling to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike traveling to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike traveling.
   ____ I dislike traveling very much.

23. Country Music (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I like country music very much.
   ____ I like country music.
   ____ I like country music to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike country music to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike country music.
   ____ I dislike country music very much.

24. Rock Music (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I like rock music very much.
   ____ I like rock music.
   ____ I like rock music to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike rock music to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike rock music.
   ____ I dislike rock music very much.
25. Spending vs. Saving (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ I strongly believe that it is more sensible to spend than save.
   ___ I believe that it is more sensible to spend than save.
   ___ I believe that perhaps it is more sensible to spend than save.
   ___ I believe that it is more sensible to save than spend.
   ___ I strongly believe that it is more sensible to save than spend.

26. Parties vs. Staying Home (check one) – I (RS)
   ___ In general, I definitely prefer going to parties than staying home.
   ___ In general, I somewhat prefer going to parties than staying home.
   ___ In general, I somewhat prefer staying home than going to parties.
   ___ In general, I prefer staying home than going to parties.
   ___ In general, I definitely prefer staying home than going to parties.

27. Attending Church (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ I strongly believe that it is important to attend church.
   ___ I believe that it is important to attend church.
   ___ I believe that perhaps it is important to attend church.
   ___ I believe that it is not important to attend church.
   ___ I strongly believe that it is not important to attend church.

28. Family (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ I strongly believe that maintaining family ties is important.
   ___ I believe that maintaining family ties is important.
   ___ I believe that perhaps maintaining family ties is important.
   ___ I believe that perhaps maintaining family ties is not important.
   ___ I believe that maintaining family ties is not important.
   ___ I strongly believe that maintaining family ties is not important.

29. Art Museums (check one) – I (RS)
   ___ I enjoy going to art museums very much.
   ___ I enjoy going to art museums.
   ___ I enjoy going to art museums to a slight degree.
   ___ I dislike going to art museums to a slight degree.
   ___ I dislike going to art museums.
   ___ I dislike going to art museums very much.
30. Religion in Daily Life (check one) – A (RS)
   ____ I feel that it is very important to incorporate religion in my daily life.
   ____ I feel that it is important to incorporate religion in my daily life.
   ____ I feel that perhaps it is important to incorporate religion in my daily life.
   ____ I feel that perhaps it is not important to incorporate religion in my daily life.
   ____ I feel that it is not important to incorporate religion in my daily life.
   ____ I feel that it is definitely not important to incorporate religion in my daily life.

31. Alcohol (check one) – A (RS)
   ____ In general, I am very much in favor of drinking alcohol.
   ____ In general, I am in favor of drinking alcohol.
   ____ In general, I am mildly in favor of drinking alcohol.
   ____ In general, I am mildly opposed to drinking alcohol.
   ____ In general, I am opposed to drinking alcohol.
   ____ In general, I am very much opposed to drinking alcohol.

32. Politically liberal vs. Conservative (check one) – A (RS)
   ____ I consider my political views as being very liberal.
   ____ I consider my political views as being liberal.
   ____ I consider my political views as being somewhat liberal.
   ____ I consider my political views as being somewhat conservative.
   ____ I consider my political views as being conservative.
   ____ I consider my political views as being very conservative.

33. Children (check one) – A (RS)
   ____ I would very much like to have children.
   ____ I would like to have children.
   ____ I would perhaps like to have children.
   ____ I would perhaps not like to have children.
   ____ I would not like to have children.
   ____ I would definitely not like to have children.

34. Adventurous Movies (check one) – I (RS)
   ____ I enjoy adventurous movies very much.
   ____ I enjoy adventurous movies.
   ____ I enjoy adventurous movies to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike adventurous movies to a slight degree.
   ____ I dislike adventurous movies.
   ____ I dislike adventurous movies very much.
35. Head of Family (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ I strongly believe that the man should be the head of the family.
   ___ I believe that the man should be the head of the family.
   ___ I believe that perhaps the man should be the head of the family.
   ___ I believe that the woman should be the head of the family.
   ___ I strongly believe that the woman should be the head of the family.

36. Outdoor Activities (check one) – I (RS)
   ___ I enjoy doing outdoor activities very much.
   ___ I enjoy doing outdoor activities.
   ___ I enjoy doing outdoor activities to a slight degree.
   ___ I dislike doing outdoor activities to a slight degree.
   ___ I dislike doing outdoor activities.
   ___ I dislike doing outdoor activities very much.

37. Exercise (check one) – A (RS)
   ___ I strongly believe that regular exercise is important.
   ___ I believe that regular exercise is important.
   ___ I believe that perhaps regular exercise is important.
   ___ I believe that perhaps regular exercise is not important.
   ___ I believe that regular exercise is not important.
   ___ I strongly believe that regular exercise is not important.

A = Attitudes
I = Interests
APPENDIX D

Importance

People differ in terms of what dimension they view as important to have in common with their partner. To what extent do you believe it is important for your partner to be similar to you in the following areas? Choose one response for each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all important</td>
<td>Slightly important</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Moderately important</td>
<td>Very important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on level of emotional fluctuation and worry versus emotional stability and calm you typically experience.

2. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on level of outgoingness and assertiveness versus shyness and passivity.

3. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on efficiency and self-discipline versus being unplanful and relatively unorganized.

4. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on tender-heartedness versus skepticism.

5. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on level of open-mindedness versus being conventional and less philosophical.

6. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on general attitudes (e.g., political, religious, monetary, childrearing, etc.).

7. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on general interests (e.g., types of music, preference for parties, sports, the arts, etc.).

8. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on religious orientation.

9. ____ The degree to which you feel it is important for him/her to be similar to you on racial and ethnic background.
APPENDIX E

*Dyadic Adjustment Scale*

Most persons have disagreements with their relationships. Please indicate below the appropriate extent of the agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

5 = Always agree
4 = Frequently agree
3 = Sometimes disagree
2 = Frequently disagree
1 = Always disagree

___ 1. Matters of recreation
___ 2. Religious matters
___ 3. Demonstration of affection
___ 4. Friends
___ 5. Sex relations
___ 6. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)
___ 7. Philosophy of life
___ 8. Aims, goals, and things believed important
___ 9. Amount of time spent together
___ 10. Making major decisions
___ 11. Leisure time interests

Please indicate below approximately how often the following items occur between you and your partner.

1 = All the time
2 = Most of the time
3 = Sometimes
4 = Rarely
5 = Never

___ 12. How often do you discuss or considered terminating the relationship?
_RS_ 13. In general, how often do you think things between you and your partner are going well?
_RS_ 14. Do you confide in your mate?
___ 15. Do you ever regret entering this relationship?
___ 16. How often do you and your partner quarrel?
___ 17. How often do you and your mate “get on each other’s nerves”?
18. Do you kiss your mate?
   - Every day: 5
   - Almost every day: 4
   - Occasionally: 3
   - Rarely: 2
   - Never: 1

19. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?
   - All of them: 5
   - Most of them: 4
   - Some of them: 3
   - Very few of them: 2
   - None of them: 1

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?
   - 1 = Never
   - 2 = less than once a month
   - 3 = Once or twice a month
   - 4 = Once a day
   - 5 = More often

   ____ 20. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas
   ____ 21. Laugh together
   ____ 22. Calmly discuss something
   ____ 23. Work together on a project

There are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate the degree to which each item below caused differences of opinions or problems in your relationship during the past few weeks.

   1 = Never
   2 = Rarely
   3 = Sometimes
   4 = Frequently
   5 = All the time

   _RS_ 24. Being too tired for sex
   _RS_ 25. Not showing love

26. The numbers represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. "Happy" represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the number that best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

   1 = Extremely unhappy
   2 = Somewhat unhappy
   3 = Slightly unhappy
   4 = Happy
   5 = Very happy
27. Please circle the number of one of the following statements that best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship.

5 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all that I can to see that it does.
4 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
3 It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to make it succeed.
2 It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
1 My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

*Spanier (1976)
APPENDIX F

Relationship Outcome

Are you and your partner still together?

____ YES  ____ NO

If you answered YES to the above, how has your relationship changed over the past 6 weeks? Check one.

____ More unstable  ____ Same  ____ More stable
APPENDIX G

Cost-Benefit Comparison

1. Given all the positive aspects of your partner and your relationship, how would you rate the extent to which your relationship is rewarding? Circle the appropriate response.

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very unrewarding</td>
<td>Somewhat unrewarding</td>
<td>Slightly unrewarding</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly rewarding</td>
<td>Somewhat rewarding</td>
<td>Very rewarding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Given all the negative aspects of your partner and your relationship, how would you rate the extent to which your relationship is taxing? Circle the appropriate response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very non-taxing</td>
<td>Somewhat non-taxing</td>
<td>Slightly taxing</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly taxing</td>
<td>Somewhat taxing</td>
<td>Very taxing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Availability of Alternatives

How confident are you that an equally desirable alternative relationship is currently available to you? Check one.

___ Not at all confident
___ Not confident
___ Somewhat not confident
___ Neutral
___ Somewhat confident
___ Confident
___ Very confident
REFERENCES


Wright, P.H. (1968). Need similarity, need complementarity and the place of personality in interpersonal attraction. *Journal of Experimental Research in Personality, 3*, 126-135.